

passed in 2010, it has undergone 70 significant changes through either acts of Congress, administrative actions, or the U.S. Supreme Court. Let me repeat that. ObamaCare has been changed a total of 70 times—in many cases through unilateral action—in order to protect the American people from its damaging effects.

I am as convinced today as I was 7 years ago when I stood on this floor to propose the first Republican amendment to ObamaCare that this law is the wrong approach to health care reform.

The bill I am reintroducing today would create policies that empower patients and doctors to take charge of their health care decisions, including by ensuring no one is priced out of the market, including individuals with pre-existing conditions; building on and expanding health savings accounts and other models to drive down costs; establishing age-adjusted tax credits for health insurance; equalizing tax treatment of employer-sponsored plans and plans purchased by individuals by letting individuals buy health insurance with pretax dollars; enhancing coverage options by letting small business owners band together across State lines through association health plans to create more affordable and comprehensive health care; letting consumers buy insurance across State lines; curbing defensive medicine and lawsuit abuse through tort reform; and making coverage more affordable by enabling individuals to own their insurance, like a 401(k) plan, so they can take it with them across State lines and if they change jobs. That only makes sense.

Americans deserve an alternative to the mandates, high costs, and bureaucratic mess that have been created by ObamaCare. The Empowering Patients First Act would repeal ObamaCare once and for all and replace it with health care reform that gives patients, families, and doctors the power to make medical decisions—not bureaucrats in Washington.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 367—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COONS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 367

Whereas a competitive global economy requires workers who are trained in skilled professions;

Whereas, according to the National Association of Manufacturers, 80 percent of respondents indicated a moderate to severe shortage of qualified skilled production employees, including front-line workers such as machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors, and technicians;

Whereas career and technical education (referred to in this preamble as “CTE”) ensures that competitive and skilled workers are ready, willing, and capable of holding jobs in high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand career fields such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics, nursing, allied health, construction, information technology, energy sustainability, and many other career fields that are vital in keeping the United States competitive in the global economy;

Whereas CTE helps the United States meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student achievement, and global competitiveness;

Whereas approximately 14,000,000 students are enrolled in CTE across the country with CTE programs in nearly 1,300 public high schools and 1,700 2-year colleges;

Whereas of the 20 fastest growing occupations—

(1) 10 require an associate’s degree or a degree with fewer requirements;

(2) 13 with the largest numbers of new jobs projected require on-the-job training, an associate’s degree, or a certificate; and

(3) nearly all require real-world skills that can be mastered through CTE;

Whereas CTE matches employability skills with workforce demand and provides relevant academic and technical coursework leading to industry-recognized credentials for secondary, postsecondary, and adult learners;

Whereas CTE affords students the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to secure careers in growing, high-demand fields;

Whereas CTE students were significantly more likely than non-CTE student to report having developed problem-solving, project completion, research, math, college application, work-related, communication, time management, and critical thinking skills during high school; and

Whereas students at schools with highly integrated rigorous academic and CTE programs have significantly higher achievement in reading, mathematics, and science than students at schools with less integrated programs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 2016 as “Career and Technical Education Month” to celebrate career and technical education across the United States;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education month;

(3) recognizes the importance of career and technical education in preparing a well-educated and skilled workforce in the United States; and

(4) encourages educators, counselors, and administrators to promote career and technical education as an option to students.

SENATE RESOLUTION 368—SUPPORTING EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF COLOMBIA TO PURSUE PEACE AND THE END OF THE COUNTRY’S ENDURING INTERNAL ARMED CONFLICT AND RECOGNIZING UNITED STATES SUPPORT FOR COLOMBIA AT THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF PLAN COLOMBIA

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. CORKER, and Mr. KAINE) submitted the

following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 368

Whereas, on October 1, 2000, President William Clinton, having worked with the support of Republican majorities in the United States Senate and the United States House of Representatives, commenced implementation of the first United States foreign assistance package in support of Plan Colombia;

Whereas Plan Colombia has received steadfast commitments from the administrations of Presidents William Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, and continuously has been strengthened by broad bipartisan support in the United States Congress;

Whereas the United States Congress, through Plan Colombia, has appropriated more than \$9,000,000,000 in foreign assistance to support initiatives of the Government of Colombia to combat the illicit narcotics trade and terrorism, confront irregular armed actors, advance democratic governance, promote economic growth, defend human rights, and pursue a strategy towards sustainable peace;

Whereas the Government of Colombia, throughout the administrations of Presidents Andrés Pastrana, Álvaro Uribe, and Juan Manuel Santos, has made investments in Plan Colombia and carried out transformational efforts to consolidate domestic security, socioeconomic development, and the rule of law that far exceed those contributions made by the United States;

Whereas the United States and Colombia have forged a resolute bond through the implementation of Plan Colombia, which has been bolstered by the support of hundreds of thousands of Colombian-Americans and their contribution to American life;

Whereas, over the past 15 years, levels of crime and violence have subsided sharply in Colombia, with annual per capita homicide rates declining from 62 per 100,000 people in 1999 to 27 per 100,000 people in 2014, and the annual number of kidnappings decreasing from more than 3,000 in 1999 to less than 300 in 2014;

Whereas the alignment of improved security and sound economic policies has translated into steady growth in Colombia’s Gross Domestic Product, which increased from \$86,000,000,000 in 1999 to more than \$377,000,000,000 in 2014, and led to greater Foreign Direct Investment, which grew from \$1,500,000,000 in 1999 to one of the highest in Latin America at \$16,000,000,000 in 2014;

Whereas the Government of Colombia has made impressive strides in reducing poverty during the last 15 years, with the poverty rate decreasing from 64 percent in 1999 to 28.5 percent in 2014, according to the World Bank;

Whereas, since 1999, the Government of Colombia has expanded the presence of the state across all 32 territorial departments, has contributed to the professionalism of the Colombian judiciary, and has improved the capacity of the Colombian Army, Navy, Air Force, and National Police;

Whereas, in November 2012, the Government of Colombia entered into talks to negotiate an end to the country’s enduring conflict with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a guerilla movement that has ties to the illicit narcotics trade, has kidnapped Colombian and United States civilians, and has been designated by the United States Department of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization;

Whereas a half-century of conflict has taken a devastating toll on Colombia’s civilian population, has claimed the lives of more than 220,000 people, and has left more than